

## II. CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user—~~in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance,~~ said device comprising:

~~having~~ a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the general direction of the arm, said arm including the wrist and the forearm; ~~said device comprising:~~

an attachment post, having a first longitudinal axis, constructed, ~~with a coupling at~~ said forward end, for attachment to said a tool or appliance;

a grip ~~having a second longitudinal axis fixed to~~ said attachment post and extending rearward therefrom, said grip having a second longitudinal axis~~with said second axis~~ extending transverse to said first axis;

a substantially planar, seat portion fixed to said grip and extending rearward therefrom in a plane transverse to said second axis, said seat portion having a convex contour from forward to rearward; and

a brace constructed substantially in the form of a helix, said helix circumscribing an open space to accommodate the arm of the user, said brace fixed to said seat and extending rearward therefrom, and

wherein said brace and said seat provide individual supporting surfaces for exerting a force on the arm in any direction about the arm, and wherein said forces, exerted in a particular direction by said individual supporting surfaces, are in separate, parallel planes, oriented substantially transverse to a longitudinal axis of the brace, and said transverse, parallel planes are displaced longitudinally on said brace and said seat.

2. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in~~ claim 1, wherein said open area circumscribed by said brace has a conical shape.

3. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in, according to claim 1, wherein said attachment post, said grip, said seat, and said brace are integrally formed as sections of a body.~~

4-5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 1, wherein said first and second axes intersect in an acute angle.

7. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 6, wherein said second axis and said plane of the seat intersect at an angle which is supplementary to said acute angle.

8. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 1, wherein the pitch of said helix decreases from forward to rearward.

9. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~

according to claim 1, wherein the radius of curvature of the helix increases from forward to rearward.

10. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 1, wherein said brace is constructed with a substantially straight portion at its distal end to ~~insure~~ provide additional space for insertion of the arm into said conical space.

11. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 1, wherein said brace is oriented with respect to the other elements of the device so that the arm is circumscribed by the brace on at least three sides.

12. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 1, wherein said brace is oriented with respect to the other elements of the device so that the wrist is free to flex to allow the hand to twist on said grip about said second axis.

13. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 1, wherein said brace is oriented with respect to the other elements of the device so that the wrist is free to flex about a third axis displaced rearward of said second axis and transverse thereto.

14. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 1, wherein said brace is oriented with respect to the other elements of the device so that the wrist is free to flex to allow the hand to twist on said grip about said second axis and to flex about a third axis displaced rearward of said second axis and transverse thereto, said flexing operating to lock the wrist and forearm into engagement with the brace to distribute forces away from the wrist.

15. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 1, wherein said tool or appliance is releasably secured to said attachment post by means of a coupling.

16. (canceled)

17. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 1, wherein said seat is substantially flateontoured from forward to rearward ~~to fit the shape of the wrist.~~

18. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user ~~in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance,~~ said device comprising:

~~having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the~~ arm, said arm including the wrist and the forearm, ~~said device comprising:~~

an attachment post having a first longitudinal axis, said post constructed, ~~with a coupling at~~ said forward end, for attachment to ~~said a~~ tool or appliance;

a grip ~~having a second longitudinal axis fixed to said attachment post and extending rearward therefrom, with said second axis~~ said grip having a second longitudinal axis extending transverse to said first axis; and

a brace constructed substantially in the form of a helix, said helix circumscribing an open space to accommodate the arm of

the user, said brace fixed to said grip and extending rearward therefrom, and

wherein said brace provides individual supporting surfaces for exerting a force on the arm in any direction about the arm, and wherein said forces, exerted in a particular direction by said individual supporting surfaces, are in separate, parallel planes, oriented substantially transverse to a longitudinal axis of the brace, and said transverse, parallel planes are displaced longitudinally on said brace.

19. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 18, wherein said open area circumscribed by said brace has a conical shape.

20. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 18, wherein said attachment post, said grip, and said brace are integrally formed as sections of a body.

21-22. (canceled)

23. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 18, wherein said first and second axes intersect in an acute angle.

24. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 18, wherein the pitch of said helix decreases from forward to rearward.

25. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 18, wherein the radius of curvature of the helix increases from forward to rearward.

26. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 18, wherein said brace is constructed with a substantially straight portion at its distal end to insure



provide additional space for insertion of the arm into said conical space.

27. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 18, wherein said brace is oriented with respect to the other elements of the device so that the arm is circumscribed on at least ~~three~~ four sides of said arm.

28. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 18, wherein said brace is oriented with respect to the other elements of the device so that the wrist is free to flex to allow the hand to twist on said grip about said second axis.

29. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 18, wherein said brace is oriented with respect to the other elements of the device so that the wrist is free to flex about a third axis displaced rearward of said second axis and transverse thereto.

30. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 18, wherein said brace is oriented with respect to the other elements of the device so that the wrist is free to flex to allow the hand to twist on said grip about said second axis and to flex about a third axis displaced rearward of said second axis and transverse thereto, said flexing operating to lock the wrist and forearm into engagement with the brace to distribute forces away from the wrist.

31. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a hand held tool or appliance, having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, said device, as described in,~~ according to claim 18, wherein said tool or appliance is releasably secured to said attachment post by means of a coupling.

32. (canceled)

33. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a grip of a hand held tool or appliance, said brace comprising:

~~having~~ a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the arm, said arm including the wrist and the forearm, said brace comprising;

a body constructed substantially in the form of a helix, said helix circumscribing an open space to accommodate the arm of the user, said brace attached to said grip and extending rearward therefrom, and

wherein said helix provides individual supporting surfaces for exerting a force on the arm in any direction about the arm, and wherein said forces, exerted in a particular direction by said individual supporting surfaces, are in separate, parallel planes, oriented substantially transverse to a longitudinal axis of the brace and said transverse, parallel planes are displaced longitudinally on said helix.

34. (currently amended) ~~A brace for distributing forces from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a grip of a hand held tool or appliance, said brace having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, as described in,~~ according to claim 33, further comprising a a substantially planar, seat portion fixed to said grip and extending rearward therefrom in a plane transverse to said second axis, said seat portion having a convex contour from forward to rearward; ~~seat attached to said grip and integrally formed with said body and extending between said grip and said body.~~

35. (currently amended) ~~A brace for distributing forces from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a grip of a hand held tool or appliance, said brace having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, as described in,~~ according to claim 34, wherein said brace and seat are integrally formed with said grip.

36. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a grip of a hand held tool or appliance, said brace having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, as described in,~~ according to claim 33, wherein said open area circumscribed by said brace has a conical shape.

37. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a grip of a hand held tool or appliance, said brace having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, as described in,~~ according to claim 33, wherein the pitch of said helix decreases from forward to rearward.

38. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a grip of a hand held tool or appliance, said brace having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, as described in,~~ according to claim 33, wherein the radius of curvature of the helix increases from forward to rearward.

39. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a grip of a hand held tool or appliance, said brace having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, as described in,~~ according to claim 33, wherein said brace is constructed with a substantially straight portion at its distal end to ~~insure~~

provide additional space for insertion of the arm into said conical space.

40. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a grip of a hand held tool or appliance, said brace having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, as described in, according to claim 33, wherein said brace is oriented with respect to the other elements of the device so that the wrist is free to flex to allow the hand to twist on said grip about said second axis.~~

41. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a grip of a hand held tool or appliance, said brace having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, as described in, according to claim 33, wherein said brace is oriented with respect to the other elements of the device so that the wrist is free to flex about a third axis displaced rearward of said second axis and transverse thereto.~~

42-43. (canceled)

44. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces ~~from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a grip of a hand held tool or appliance, said brace having a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the forearm, as described in, according to claim 33, wherein said brace is oriented with respect to the other elements of the device so that the wrist is~~

free to flex to allow the hand to twist on said grip about said second axis and to flex about a third axis displaced rearward of said second axis and transverse thereto, said flexing operating to lock the wrist and forearm into engagement with the brace to distribute forces away from the wrist.